

SECRET

8 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

**SUBJECT: Report by Secretary McNamara and General Taylor
to Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

1. The undersigned sat in for the more than three-hour briefing by McNamara and Taylor of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The attendance was good. Present were: Fulbright, Morse, Church, Carlson, Aiken, Hickenlooper, Lausche, and Sparkman. Gore and Mansfield were present for only a portion of the briefing.

2. Mr. McNamara made a general introduction and then turned the meeting over to General Krulak for a brief discussion of the disposition of the Vietnamese forces and the Viet Cong forces.

3. General Taylor then reported on the progress of the war stating that it was going well and that the recent political disturbances had not significantly affected military operations as yet. He discussed the various indicators as to how the war was going, i. e., (a) Viet Cong casualty rates, (b) weapons losses, (c) defectors, and (d) combat incidents. General Taylor indicated that in contrast with conditions some time ago the Vietnamese army is now in the field and it is receiving better intelligence from the villages which form the basis of successful attacks on Viet Cong. Taylor summed up the progress of the war by saying that in the north in Corps areas 1 and 2 the war was going well, in Corps area 3 which includes Saigon the results are mixed and in the fourth Corps area, the Delta area in the south, needs attention and is getting attention in terms of increased effort and the shifting of one division from the north was mentioned. Taylor, in

SECRET

SECRET

summing up, stated that there are no discernible effects of political activities on the progress of the war away from the Saigon area. On the other hand, as one gets closer to Saigon, there are individual officers who are concerned but Taylor could find no evidence that the political situation is affecting the performance of the military or the course of the war. Taylor stated that the military in the field were somewhat more optimistic than he was as to how long the war would last and when it would be won but he gave his view that in Corps areas 1 and 2 the task could be completely turned over to the Vietnamese by the end of 1964 and in the Delta area by 1965.

4. Senator Fulbright asked for comments on the reports of dissonance in the U. S. elements in Vietnam. McNamara pointed out that there are different roles and naturally there will be different views. However, his report to the President was fully endorsed by all departments and approved by the National Security Council and included a conclusion that the erosion of popular support has not yet gone to the point of preventing the war from going ahead successfully. In answer to a specific question, McNamara stated that CIA always fully coordinated its activities and this had never been otherwise. He said the Agency had been criticized unfairly and had never, to his knowledge, acted contrary to instructions. He touched on the mission assigned to the Agency of training counterinsurgency forces and the turnover of this responsibility to DOD. He stated the Agency had carried out this assignment ably.

5. Senator Sparkman raised the press report of CIA support of special forces which had been used to attack the pagodas. Mr. McNamara very clearly pointed out that CIA had in fact trained and supported these forces at the instruction of the U. S. Government for border patrol work and training the mountain tribe. He pointed out that these forces under General Tung had been extensively used in combat operations but without the knowledge of the U. S. Government had been utilized in part for the pagoda raids. McNamara emphasized that in any event this should not be termed CIA support of the special forces but should be termed U. S. Government support since CIA was only carrying out instructions. Sparkman asked about the reports on the recall of Richardson and his replacement. Mr. McNamara suggested that this was a question better addressed to Mr. McCone.

SECRET

SECRET

6. Senator Hickenlooper put in the record the Starnes article of 2 October 1963 and then proceeded to ask questions about each item in the article. In all, Hickenlooper divided his questions into ten specific points. To each of these McNamara responded variously -

"nothing to support the charge;"

no refusal to carry out instructions, on contrary "faithfully carried out" all of its orders;

"unfounded charges;"

"CIA has always been cooperative;"

implication of failure of CIA to follow orders - no evidence to support and in any event "not acceptable" to McNamara since the Ambassador is the boss;

know of no CIA penetration of U. S. agencies;

found no military criticism of CIA and in fact many military serve under CIA control and in general the view seemed to be that CIA officers were brave and imaginative.

Mr. McNamara made the point that there might well be a question of whether or not CIA should have had the responsibility of training these large forces since the CIA people involved could not remain covert and that this is a legitimate question for consideration; but in carrying out the assignment CIA had done an excellent job. McNamara stated also that CIA activities were very well controlled and were well known to him and to General Taylor throughout the world. On the question of the intelligence put out by the Agency, McNamara stated that it is quite satisfactory from his viewpoint. He also stated the Agency is fully under White House control. Senator Hickenlooper had asked General Taylor to either associate himself with McNamara's views or add any comments and General Taylor did not offer any different views. Asked if he had any general comment, Mr. McNamara stated he could sum it all up by saying the words in headline "Arrogant and Disobeys" are simply not true and that there is no evidence to support it. Senator Hickenlooper offered his view that there was an organized movement to discredit our information agencies, mentioning CIA and FBI, with a view of destroying them. Mr. McNamara said he had no evidence to support this.

7. Senator Morse made reference to his views on the Joint Committee stating he was proud to be in the group trying to bring CIA under checks and balances. Morse also asked how many CIA people are

SECRET

SECRET

working in AID in Vietnam and Mr. McNamara suggested this question be asked of Mr. McCone.

8. When Church asked for an appraisal of the effectiveness of the Diem government, Mr. McNamara said he thought the proper question was is it the most effective government. Taylor also stated the record should show that in fact there is no alternative at the present time to the Diem government.

9. There were several other references to the DCI appearing and during the course of the meeting Senator Fulbright sent word to inquire if the Director could be available for Friday morning at ten o'clock. (Senator Fulbright was subsequently advised that this was satisfactory.)

s/ John S. Warner

JOHN S. WARNER
Legislative Counsel

cc: DCI
DDCI
Executive Director
DD/P

OGC/LC Subject - Sen. For. Relations
OGC/LC - Chrono.

OGC/LC:JSW:mks

SECRET